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For the first time, a US Congress-backed panel on religious freedom would visit India next month to gain perspective on Indian government's response to allegations of communal violence in Gujarat, Orissa and other parts of the country.

As a result, the **US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)** refrained from publishing the status of religious freedom in India in its annual report released on Friday.

However, the report does mention Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi as the only individual who has been denied an American visa under the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA), which bars entry into the US of those foreigners who are "responsible for or directly carried out, particularly severe violations of religious freedom".